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Endangered Species Day Activities Planned May 15 and 16 at Woods Hole Science Aquarium

Meet the researchers, participate in hands-on activities

NOAA's Woods Hole Science Aquarium will be offering special events for the public on Friday, May 15, in recognition of National Endangered Species Day. Activities will continue on Saturday, May 16, to raise awareness of endangered and protected species and research being conducted at the Woods Hole Laboratory, part of NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC).

A variety of displays, exhibits and hands-on activities will be offered from 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. on both days, right after the seal feeding at 11 a.m. Meet some of the scientists conducting research on sea turtles, North Atlantic right whales and other whale species and learn more about the research they are conducting in nearby waters and offshore. See Atlantic salmon in one of the Aquarium's display tanks and learn more about the salmon research being conducted by local NOAA Fisheries scientists in the Northeast U.S.

Staff will be available between 11:30 and 1:30 p.m. each day to discuss the NEFSC's research programs on marine protected species and recent and upcoming field programs focused on whales, sea turtles and salmon.

Aquarium staff and volunteers will also be on hand with some special activities, including the conservation cart where visitors can touch various specimens and learn about protected species. The Aquarium features approximately 90 species of animals of the Northeast and Middle Atlantic region, as well as a behind-the-scenes touch tank where visitors may find lobsters, horseshoe crabs, sea stars (starfish) and hermit crabs, as well as other animals found in local waters.

National Endangered Species Day is celebrated each year on the third Friday in May. The federal Endangered Species Act, signed into law in 1973, is administered by two federal agencies, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

The Woods Hole Science Aquarium, the nation's oldest public marine aquarium, is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. (closed federal holidays). The seal pool area opens at 10:30 a.m., with seal feedings at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. most days. No off-street public

parking is available, but limited on-street metered parking provided by the Town of Falmouth is available nearby. Admission to the Aquarium is free, but donations are accepted.

For further information and directions, contact the Woods Hole Science Aquarium at 508-495-2001, or visit the Aquarium web site at <http://aquarium.nefsc.noaa.gov>

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